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TAGS: [NATO](#) [NAC](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [EI](#)  
SUBJECT: BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO IRELAND NAMED NEW UK  
AMBASSADOR TO NATO

Classified By: Ambassador James C. Kenny; Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

UK AMBASSADOR TO IRELAND REASSIGNED TO NATO  
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11. (SBU) The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced on June 9 the appointment of UK Ambassador to Ireland Stewart Eldon to succeed Sir Peter Ricketts as the UK Permanent Representative on the North Atlantic Council. Eldon will leave to take up his new appointment in late August 2006. Eldon,s successor in Dublin has not yet been announced.

ELDON'S TENURE IN DUBLIN  
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12. (C) Stewart Eldon is one of the hardest working ambassadors in Dublin. He knows everyone who matters in government, politics, business, and society; makes it his business to thoroughly learn every issue in his brief; and attends and hosts a huge variety of functions as a way of exercising influence, gaining information, and countering lingering Irish resentment of the UK. The U.S. embassy has worked most closely with him on the Northern Irish peace process and domestic Irish politics. On both topics, he demonstrates his up to the minute knowledge. He is particularly good at assessing personalities, and understanding how internal processes either help or hinder progress. We have seen this on issues as diverse as the peace process; how the U.S. might persuade the Irish to be helpful on an issue at the EU; and Irish crisis management capacity. If he has a fault, it might be that because he is so often the most knowledgeable person in the room, his staff can be reluctant to disagree with him. On the peace process, we have always found him insightful and knowledgeable, but not always the best predictor of where things are going.

13. (C) As for his stand on political/military issues, the Irish are so extremely sensitive about their neutrality, that Eldon would not have made much mention of NATO here. His official biography indicates that he was political counselor at NATO in 1994, and deputy crisis manager in the FCO,s Middle East office during the first Gulf War. He served at the UN in New York three times. He spent an academic year at Harvard and was a visiting fellow at Yale. Our assessment is that he will bring to NATO the same high level of activity, and will want to be known as one of its hardest working ambassadors. He will know everyone, know the issues backwards and forwards, master the processes, and, given his scientific background, grasp even the more arcane subjects NATO deals with. What we wish we knew more about were his attitudes toward NATO,s future roles. We do know that he made a point of hosting officials from the Irish Department of Defense frequently. The Irish DoD is under funded, and its political leadership is often overly cautious. By hosting them regularly, Eldon sought to bolster those who favor an Irish role in EU battle groups, and Irish

contributions to peace keeping forces.

14. (SBU) Bio provided by the British Embassy Dublin. (Begin bio).

Born in Accra in 1953, Stewart Eldon was educated at Pocklington School in Yorkshire and Christ's College, Cambridge, where he gained a starred First in Electrical Sciences in 1974. He spent two further years at Cambridge engaged in research on semiconductor lasers, for which he was awarded an MSc in 1976.

On joining the Diplomatic Service in 1976, Mr Eldon was posted to the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations. Further periods of work on UN matters followed in London and New York before he was posted to the Political Section of the Embassy in Bonn in 1978.

After returning to London in 1982 on promotion to First Secretary, Mr Eldon spent 18 months working on Irish affairs

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in Republic of Ireland Department of the FCO. He then served for nearly three years as Private Secretary to Baroness Young, who was at that time Minister of State in the FCO and Deputy to Sir Geoffrey Howe. Mr Eldon was posted back to the UK Mission to the UN in 1986, where he covered African and Asian affairs in the UN Security Council and General Assembly and acted as Deputy Head of Chancery.

In August 1990 Mr Eldon returned to the FCO as Assistant Head of Middle Eastern Department. He served as Deputy Crisis Manager during the Gulf War and was awarded an OBE in the Gulf Honours List in 1991. In December 1991, on promotion to Counsellor, he was seconded to the European Secretariat of the Cabinet Office and involved in both the aftermath of the negotiations on the Maastricht Treaty and the UK EU Presidency in 1992.

Mr Eldon spent the academic year 1993/94 as a Fellow of the Centre for International Affairs of Harvard University. His research paper on the impact of new information systems on Foreign Ministries was published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

From October 1994 Mr Eldon served as Counsellor and Head of the Political Section of the UK Delegations to NATO and the Western European Union in Brussels, where he worked on European Defence issues, the enlargement of NATO, and the Alliance's outreach to the East. In September 1997 he returned to the FCO on promotion as Director (Conferences), with responsibility for coordinating the arrangements for the four major Summit Conferences held in the UK between October 1997 and June 1998.

In September 1998 Mr Eldon was appointed Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, with the personal rank of Ambassador. He was made a CMG in the 1999 New Year's Honours List.

After leaving the UK Mission in September 2002, Mr Eldon spent three months as a Visiting Fellow at Yale University. His work there on East Timor (on which he was personally involved during his time at the UN) will form part of a book on the UN Security Council to be published by the International Peace Academy in New York in early 2004.

Mr Eldon was appointed British Ambassador to Ireland in April 2003.

Mr Eldon married Christine Mason in January 1978. They have two children: a daughter (1982) and a son (1985).

(End bio).

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